The
COMMONWEAL

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Miscasting Mussolini

IN THE MINDS of too many people there has popped up in Italy since the war a brand new Mussolini, the great white hope for peace. This popular figure has a holy horror of communism. His innocence was surprised by Hitler's arrangement with the Russians ("since he is a Latin he has never liked Hitler anyway"). His Italian régime is nothing more than a local adaptation of the eternal principles of law and order. And, as a Catholic, he is a sort of lay arm at the service of the Pope's peace efforts. It is indeed difficult to imagine the Nazi régime living in cooperation and peace with the more or less liberal capitalist Western world, and the Communists have succeeded in convincing this world that they have no intention of trying to do so. But the admirers of "Salvatore Pace"—as Mussolini presently is called by fun-loving Italians—can see no unreality in Italy's participation in a conciliatory compromise of live-and-let-live, an arrangement which Mussolini will help to obtain by diplomacy leading to peace, or, that failing, by entering the war on the side of the Allies. These views are unaffected by such details as the recent departure of the British Trade Mission from Italy, the description of American diplomats as "green grocers" by the Italian press on the news of the arrival of Mr. Welles and Mr. Taylor, the congratulatory message sent by Mussolini to Japan. For such people there is already a new Mussolini, just as in other countries there are from time to time new cabinets and new policies.

"Salvatore Pace"

No picture of the man could be more insulting. Not merely because from the start it supposes treachery to his German allies and idiocy in having ever selected them. It is insulting because it supposes treachery to the system, to the aims, to what is called the "style" of the Fascist Revolution. It supposes that Mussolini, the children to whom he has given muskets with the password "believe and obey" (a motto *Osservatore Romano* recently attacked anew), the men he has armed at tremendous cost, to whom he has given "practical" war training in Ethiopia, Spain and Albania, are now cowering in fear before a situation they deliberately and for years have been provoking; and that a man who has stated repeatedly that war is a normal and, at times, a desirable phenomenon in the life of healthy nations is afraid of it and cannot use it when it is at hand.

It supposes that Mussolini with his life work ruined does not know what he wants. Well, we think that he knows what he wants and that it is useful to state once more that what he has constantly desired and still desires is the destruction of the Democracies, with their possibilities for becoming real democracies, the domination by the Italian totalitarian state of large regions in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, the creation and maintenance of a power group of totalitarian states which includes Japan—and the transfer of world power to this group. We think that it was Mussolini's intention to exclude Russia from this group but that Russia's entrance will not alone break it up. We think that Mussolini, in accord with Germany, is holding his power as a strategic reserve, that every Allied statesman is aware of the fact, that Mussolini's real effort for peace is for a peace which will consolidate the advantages already gained by his group and perpetuate the social revolution which is its mainspring. Americans, if they wish to evaluate realistically the facts of the war, would do best to abandon the legend of Mussolini man of peace and take him for what he says he is, the leader of one wing of the totalitarian revolution. A change in the fundamental aims and policy of this revolution can only occur together with its collapse. Nothing short of the combined power of the neutrals in demanding peace coupled with a realization that the Allies are too strong to be defeated is likely to bring about this change and this collapse.

On March first Italy's racial law against the Jews became effective, which means that there is a category of Italian citizens officially barred from professional careers, limited in property rights, morally cut off from the nation. We know that the Italian conscience some day will reawaken, but up to the last minute Fascism will be fascist.

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The Not Wholly Quiet Western Front

THRICE HAPPILY, it is not guns that are heard in the main in the Western European war. But there are other noises. First, and most literally, the radios are busy. It is not only the famous German broadcaster whom the English (ever unpredictable) have taken to their hearts and eardrums under the title of "Lord Haw Haw"; nor even only the other German broadcaster whom the more logical French call "the Stuttgart traitor" because of his perfect French accent. There are also the loud speakers at the front broadcasting music and news, real and alleged, and occasionally taunts, across the enemy lines. And of late another noise has begun. We speak now in metaphor—not literally of that diffusion of vibrations which produces auditory sensation, but of something at any rate that actually engages attention as much. That is the recurring debate in regard to soldiers' fashions. To date we have not noted any record of the Germans taking part, but there is a lively dispersal of fashion notes from the Allied fronts. First the mode of English uniforms, as of the last war, was discarded; then, as soon as all the Tommies were in the new outfits, they were changed back again. What the bill was, or who got the discarded suits, does not appear in the accounts. Next came news of the Scottish regiments, which held out as stoutly as one would expect for their traditional kilts instead of the breeks decreed by the War Office. We are for them, if only to preserve the meaning of a beautiful phrase coined, as we have heard, by Germans in the last war: "the ladies from hell." Currently, the French War Office seems to be taking the poilus *out of* breeks and puttees and induing them in a combination of Norwegian ski suit and American naval leggings; the while, again as one would expect, there is talk of the martial effectiveness of the new "silhouette." Well, as we said at the start, it is better anyway than cannonading.

Non-Military Noises

Gallipoli Moves to the Caucasus

A TURKISH lady journalist has recently referred to the "no man's land between the Maginot and Siegfried lines" as the world's "only quiet and unchanging spot." More and more the gentlemen employed by the Press to expertize the war picture are discounting the possibility of any decisive action on the western front. From this judgment they divide into two schools—the blockade, starving out, this-war-is-a-naval-war school; and the school of those who believe victory will come by a knockout blow delivered from some new "front," whether that front be the air or another terrain for land battle. It looks very much as though the Allies were planning the Caucasus, from which Germany must obtain a great part of her necessary oil, as this war's Gallipoli. An article by a prominent British major general in *The Weekly Review* strongly urges this, and blames the Allied disaster of 1915 not on its conception but on its execution, "which was beneath contempt." From the point of view of the spectator, of course, that would make the whole thing more exciting. It would also extend the area of war. It would involve Turkey. It would specifically and finally involve England and France with Russia. There is little to guarantee that it, too, would not be badly carried out. And it would tend to strengthen revolution by its effect on the morale of both sides. What is worst needed is no fronts, not new fronts.

Planning Knockout Blows

Touchstone of Egoism

THE ATTITUDE of Americans toward refugees and aliens is becoming almost a touchstone of our sincerity in wanting to see this country do its part in alleviating the miseries of the world, in relieving pressure around the globe and in helping peace. On last June 30, 657,353 persons were registered with US Consulates abroad for admission under the immigration quotas, more than double the number of June 30, 1938. Almost a half, 309,782, were registered for Germany, enough to fill that nation's quota for 11 years. But there are tragically few signs that Americans are accepting more responsibility and becoming less stonily exclusivist. Way out in the Philippines a legislative committee has approved a new law fixing annual immigration quotas for each country, including war-torn and poverty stricken Japan and China with their multitudes, at 1,000. The law is "reported to have been drawn by American experts." Let us hope that the bill, if it comes through to the last step, will be vetoed by the President of the United States, and let us hope the United States will soon furnish experts with a new spirit.

Keeping the Foreigners Out

The tendency of this country to set up as a well-toothed dog crouching over this hemisphere's richly filled manger is not unremarked abroad. In the February 24 *Saturday Evening Post*, Roberto Piña, a Mexican, frankly pictures how it looks to our good neighbors down under the border: "Incidentally, these simple facts show up the consecrated Monroe Doctrine for what it is—a put-up job, in that a great fuss is made over the need of defending people who do not wish to be defended, from a danger that does not exist, in order to keep strangers away from America's twenty unwilling stepchildren." Even if social responsibility and human generosity do involve some "danger," that cannot compare with the danger of the policy of the closed door and closed heart.

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The Campaign for President

Our Choice for 1940

WITH Republican candidates appearing before widely scattered women's clubs, third-term rumors rampant, and Jack Garner filing here and there, it is high time that THE COMMONWEAL announced its stand on the coming election. To begin with we assert our responsibility and our intention to analyze—without worrying about treading on political toes—candidates, planks, platforms, issues, solely on the basis of their ascertainable merits. And while we are talking about non-partisanship, there are two things we don't like in the present political picture. One is the ballyhoo for a Roosevelt third term, the other the appointment of Ernest T. Weir as Republican campaign fund chairman. Viewed realistically there is little to choose between the two parties. They are too much alike for THE COMMONWEAL to antagonize thousands of its readers by hitching the wagon to either one. In performance, and to a lesser degree in platform, there is a strong resemblance. Neither presents a program this magazine considers worth partisan enthusiasm. In the past seven years the New Deal has made notable contributions to social progress, particularly in the fields of labor relations and conservation. A number of its broad objectives genuinely evoke enthusiasm. There is much in Republican criticism and projected assistance for various economic groups. Both parties presumably desire the happiness of their constituents. But neither has an impressive record for carrying out campaign promises. The candidates put on a good show and we await the coming campaign with considerable relish.

President Hutchins Diagnoses

First Things First

THOSE WHO have followed public utterances for the last few years must realize, we think, one significant and hopeful change from the prevailing note of a decade or so ago. It is that the realities of the mind and spirit can be mentioned today without eliciting straightway a yawn or a laugh from the audience. We do not speak, of course, of the very considerable group typified most completely by Catholics, to whom the great imponderables have been by definition articles of belief throughout the time of crassest and most contented materialism. We speak of those outside and their following, for the change among them offers a special means for measuring. How extensive it is no one knows; but it is at least a striking thing that President Hutchins of Chicago University (himself of course the country's first exemplar of a return to basic things in the secular field) could address the Yale Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa in these terms: "Our problems are moral, intellectual and spiritual. The paradox of starving in the midst of plenty illustrates the nature of our difficulties. This paradox will not be resolved by technical skill or scientific data. It will be resolved, if resolved at all, by vision and goodness." Wisdom and goodness! Surely it is not being too easily hopeful to see an augury in the public invocation, the public acceptance, of these.

The Lilliputians' Unpleasant Refrain

The Nation's Theology

THE SEVENTY-FIVE year old *Nation* currently affirms in a remarkably stark declaration of atheism that "unlike the Roman Catholic Hierarchy," they "are not in favor of 'bringing God back' into economic life." It is either atheism, or a more stupid and doddering expression of radical secularism—separating the various lines of human interest; attacking the integration of man and of society; spurning the unity of theory and practice—than so much antiquity alone can explain. First fruits of such an obscurantist position are visible in the same short paragraph: a disloyal examination of a document (the recent Bishops' statement on the social question); a ruthless misinterpretation of that document and the position of the Church; a pitiful and archaic misreading of history.

"Pie in the sky," says *The Nation,* echoing socialist materialism. But Karl Marx rarely laid himself open to easier attack than when he classified religion as the "opium of the people," a reactionary or destructive force in history. It is exactly religion which has furnished the stimulus and form for every civilization known to history, a fact practically every single historian has been showing during many decades. Perhaps the historians have been reaffirming this most conclusively in the period since *The Nation's* brain cells hardened.

The Bishops turn away from economic liberalism and also communism-socialism, as *The Nation* correctly notes. But *The Nation* can see within that whole vast area between—nothing. Let us hope such senile impotence is not contagious. Have they forgot about ownership and responsibility, for instance, or the social use of property, "government regulation," social security, decent wages, democratic sharing of ownership and power in industry? Why do they ask: "Is this a plea for the Catholic 'corporate state?'" Of course it is, and if they tried to read straight they would see it is a far different thing than their innuendos try to suggest, i.e., fascism. After all, it is *The Nation* which defends "labor monopolies" and, by fair logic if not conscious intent, "force and domination" too. They are the ones who in all advocate the centralized and monopolistic concept of the socialist state. *The Nation* needs new glands.

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A Patient's Eye View

One mother's experiences with private, charity and governmental medicos.

By June Coyne

IN THE small Western mining town where I was born, the pleasant habit of having a family doctor was taken for granted. I can well remember the intense loyalty my childhood friends and I felt toward our respective family doctors; we had complete confidence in their ability, good will, and friendship. We quarreled as violently over them as we did over election candidates.

Once during a college vacation I worked in our doctor's office, and I found his account books astonishing indeed. The very poor families were receiving free medical treatment, not paid for by taxpayers' money. Incidentally, it was not only the very poor who never paid their doctor bills, but often some of the seemingly well-fixed families There were a good many mining accidents, and each doctor had mining company contracts besides his private practice. Since his income came from both salary and fees, no doubt a doctor in that town did not suffer especially from unpaid bills; but throughout the country there must be thousands of kind-hearted doctors who are greatly imposed upon, and who really need the fees they can't collect.

After my marriage I was plunged into the complicated maze of New York specialists, clinics and seemingly hard-to-find general practitioners. The change from the security of a family doctor who had known every childhood ailment and almost every family secret was not pleasant.

Our first baby was born in regular middle-class, city style. We had a private obstetrician, who had painfully consented to lower his fee to $150, and a semi-private hospital room which cost $100. After the baby was born the obstetrician informed me that I simply must have a pediatrician. I asked him if he couldn't take care of babies, and I was quickly put in my place when he informed me that he didn't know a thing about babies. So, at the cost of $5 an office call, we engaged a pediatrician who examined the baby before we left the hospital. His advice by telephone was available at any time; he regularly examined the baby's progress month by month.

By the time the baby was six months old my husband's once fairly prosperous small business had taken a decided slump. We felt we could no longer afford the pediatrician. I had been taking the baby to a park where I saw a number of obviously poor mothers with young babies. I began to be curious about the cost of their medical care. When I told one young mother about my difficulty in paying doctor bills, she was amazed at my ignorance. She explained to me that the City of New York has Baby Health Stations, where she and all the mothers she knew got free medical advice. She kindly offered to take me with her the next time she went.

Baby Health Station

I was entranced with the Baby Health Station. The nurses and doctors seemed very friendly and really interested in their work. My baby could have a doctor's examination and supervision on all general problems as before, besides vaccination and immunization against diphtheria, at a minimum effort to myself and at no expense. One day I remarked that I never saw any sick babies. The nurse explained that the service was for well babies only; they had no dispensary license and could not treat diseases. Fortunately my first baby was never sick.

My husband and I were panic stricken when we realized that a second baby was coming with his financial condition grown worse instead of better. We had learned from experience that taking care of a baby was cheap enough, but how could we possibly afford the expense of its birth? Again I talked with my poor friend in the city park. I found that her baby had been born in a hospital clinic. I talked with other poor mothers and discovered that hospital maternity clinic fees ran from zero to $65 and no higher. This fee included pre-natal care, delivery, from ten to fourteen days hospitalization for mother and child and post-natal care. We finally decided upon a hospital in the Village, where I paid a fee of $50 on the installment plan.

The pre-natal care was satisfactory enough. Being a proud, middle-class American, I found it trying to have to spend so much time waiting in lines and being ignored when I asked questions. I also missed the pleasant security and subtle flattery of private care.

My labor started in the early morning hours on a Saturday. We called the hospital, and I was admitted at once with no more trouble than there would have been had I been a private case. The

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routine treatment was exactly the same as I had had previously: a private labor room, solicitious and friendly nurses coming and going just as before. The door of my room was open. About 11 a.m. I heard three young doctors complaining about the injustice of having three cases on a Saturday when they had planned to see a football game. Someone else apparently heard them too, for a brisk female voice began telling them what fine doctors they would be if they continued to think more of football than of their patients. They took the rebuke in silence, and I felt momentarily thankful to be in a hospital where the administration was strict and respected by the staff.

About the same time that my nurse left with the welcome news that she would be right back with a stretcher to wheel me into the delivery room, I heard my doctor say, "I am going to lunch now, there's plenty of time." The Sister in charge replied indignantly that he wouldn't be thinking of lunch if that were his wife or sister in there. He was not very pleasant about it, but he agreed to "stick around and see if he could help."

The stretcher arrived, and as we entered the delivery room I saw a large clock and made it a point to memorize the time. It was 12:15. I am sure about this, as up to that point it had been considered inadvisable to give me any medication or anesthetic. The baby's birth certificate gave the time of birth as 12:23. If it hadn't been for the presence of a ward supervisor, the bored and disinterested doctor would doubtless have had his lunch, and my baby would have been born with the help of the nurses alone.

In this total lack of personal interest, which other hospital clinic patients tell me is not peculiar to my own experience, lies one of the great problems of "non-private" medicine. How can a patient have any mental peace and confidence unless he is made to feel as though his welfare is important and of some personal interest to the doctor in charge?

Back to the hospital

Shortly after I brought the baby home from the hospital I took her back in a dying condition. She had infantile diarrhea. Had we been poor enough for the Henry Street Visiting Nurses or the Little Sisters of the Assumption to send a daily visitor to our home, the developing condition would have received medical attention sooner; had we been as well off as previously, a pediatrician would have seen her long before. Incidentally, had this been my first baby no doubt I would have had less confidence and in spite of weakness and a dread of waiting in clinic lines, would have taken her back to the hospital as I had been asked to do when I left. In any case her once lusty cry almost overnight became a mere whimper; her once rosy face was heart-breakingly white. This time there was no waiting in line: when the first clerk saw the baby's face she took us straight to the pediatric ward. The baby lived, and the day finally came when I could bring her home. The nurses and even the doctors had been most kind and sympathetic.

From four weeks to almost three months the baby remained healthy. Then she developed diarrhea, an earache and infantile eczema all at the same time. I brought her back to the same hospital. One of the staff pediatricians had seemed especially concerned; one day he had actually apologized for keeping me waiting. By this time our business outlook was brighter, and we decided to borrow $50 and spend it on private care for her. We hoped to be able to get away from clinics permanently. We decided to call in the pediatrician who had been polite at the clinic, not just because he had been nice, but chiefly because he knew the baby's history so well.

The ear and diarrhea conditions disappeared, the eczema continued to get worse. Our pediatrician finally sent us to a private skin specialist. While treating her skin, this doctor noticed that the ear condition had developed again and he sent us to a private ear specialist. The ear healed again and apparently finally got better, but the eczema seemed to grow worse. The sum we had set aside for private medical care had more than disappeared; we couldn't continue to borrow; we were forced back into hospital clinics.

About that time a very kind-hearted Jewish mother in the park, who had been suffering almost as much as I over the baby's tortures, told me about a wonderful skin clinic in the Ghetto. They had a most humane ruling in this hospital that any mother with a baby in arms could go ahead of all adult patients. I was only able to make one trip there, however, as the treatment cost me $3.50 a visit, and a daily visit was prescribed. Had I known the ropes about clinics, doubtless the social service department could have got me a lower fee, but we felt we couldn't possibly pay so much.

Then a friend wrote a personal letter to the head of the skin department at a large medical center about my baby, and told me the time to go there. I made the long trip to the hospital; I held the restless baby through several lines of waiting adults. When we arrived upstairs at the proper place we were both in a state of exhaustion. It was a hot day, and the baby's little body was exposed enough for anyone to see that it resembled a mass of raw beef. Her cries were not pretty, but they were certainly piteous. Still the clerks were treating me with even more callous indifference than I had encountered anywhere else in public medical care. Finally, having been cold-shouldered around from one desk to another and one clerk to another, all of whom obviously didn't believe my story about Dr. X expecting me, I burst into tears and started to go home. As I was getting on the

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elevator a formerly frigid but now very apologetic girl came running after me to say Dr. X just telephoned that he had been waiting all the time!

The rest of the story of my baby's eczema would soon grow boring, besides appearing utterly fantastic to anyone who has not had contact with a similar ailment. There is a happy ending, however, for I found a doctor whose treatment relieved the condition.

He was a gruff, blustering old fellow in still another clinic. He genuinely loved his patients. I used to like watching him handle sick babies, for he seemed to yearn over the suffering of each one. I talked with other mothers at this clinic, and they all agreed about his interest in his work, his patience, unselfishness, his real joy over good results.

Possibly it is not too idealistic to hope to build up this genuine love for suffering humanity in all clinic workers. But unless a doctor possesses it, I cannot help but conclude that his patients are better off, psychologically at least, when they know that their doctor is directly dependent on them for his fees.

Right now I am expecting my third baby, and confident of being able to afford private care. But should circumstances change, I might again be forced into a clinic. I shudder at the thought. On the other hand, when I first look into that mysteriously old and wise face of my own newborn baby, the circumstances of his birth won't matter, and never will make any difference, to either one of us.

Catholic Teachers in Public Schools

How much do a teacher's religious convictions affect her work in the classroom?

By A. E. Quigley

THE OTHER DAY LaVonne, the glamor girl of my fourth period class, stopped admiring her glossy, red nails long enough to ask a question so startling that it brought the whole class to embarrassed attention.

"You know," she said plaintively, "if the world is so awful and everything, I think it would get better if everybody knew about religion. Why don't they teach it in school?"

Frowning prettily, she settled back to the contemplation of her nails, utterly oblivious of the horrified stares directed at her by her classmates. Their thoughts echoed in the room almost as loudly as spoken words. Why, of all the dumb questions! Anybody knew you couldn't teach religion in the public schools. Anybody knew it was against the Bill of Rights or the Declaration of Independence or something.

For my part, I looked at LaVonne with wonder and something like respect. Why should she, admittedly the slowest to catch on, be the one to touch accurately the rotten spot of our educational system? Why should she sense the futility of an education which avoided the essential and ultimate fact of our existence—that we are created beings responsible first of all to our Creator?

Since then I have thought of many answers to her question, none of them anything like the answer I made at the time. Because, with the habit of caution strong within me, I sidestepped the question and answered diplomatically. I referred briefly to the difficulty of satisfying people of all religious beliefs if we were to teach religion. LaVonne was satisfied and the class approved.

But that answer has bothered me. Why did I answer in that way? Suppose I had said that I, too, thought it was very stupid reasoning which had caused the public school system to abandon religion entirely, merely to escape sectarianism. Or, suppose I had told LaVonne of Pope Pius XII's warning that we in America could not continue to confine human knowledge "within the cramped limits of rationalism."

Not for a minute do I believe that either statement would have endangered my job or my prestige as a teacher. It was simply that I had been caught for the moment by the excessive caution common to most Catholic teachers. This caution stems, I believe, from the knowledge that we teach in the public schools at the sufferance of the non-Catholic public and that we can expect little or no support from those of our own faith. Feeling this, the majority of us become self-conscious, even fearful lest our Catholicism color our teaching.

There are Catholic teachers who will deny, quite sincerely, that we teach under such a handicap. Among the thousands in the public schools there are many unaware of any conflict. There are a few who are articulate representatives of the faith and a force for good. Nevertheless the majority of the Catholic teachers of my acquaintance will bear me out.

Many of these teachers, in fact, base their caution on something much more tangible than a

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feeling of dependence. They did not need the liberal *New Republic* to admonish them that "this country is overwhelmingly non-Catholic; and that the bitter intolerance of the Ku Klux Klan and similar groups is still lurking just below the surface." Too many of them can cull examples of this intolerance from their own experience and that of their acquaintances. I myself can still hear the self-righteous, booming voice of the first superintendent ever to interview me. "Frankly, harrmph—frankly, our school board questions whether a Catholic, educated in Catholic schools, has any *right* in the public schools!" And his school board was not, as one might suspect, elected from a small rural community but from the prosperous suburb of one of the largest Midwest cities.

This instance may indeed be extreme, but it is the memory of such anecdotes which serves to keep the average Catholic teacher in a wary and cautious mood.

Students, too

And teachers are not the only ones. Catholic students in a large city high school in Minnesota were so bullied and humiliated by office authorities on holy days this past autumn that many presented false excuses rather than say they were tardy because they had gone to Mass. The school is situated in a rather poor district and a large number of the students held early morning jobs, delivering papers and opening grocery stores. Either they had to go to the later Mass—and face the storm in the office—or miss Mass altogether.

Fortunately, angry parents complained to the Board of Education and the matter was adjusted. But few are the Catholic parents who find out about matters much more pertinent to their children's religious welfare—whether, for example, controversial subjects like history, social problems and biology are taught in a way that is not irreconcilable with Catholic doctrine and Catholic philosophy. They sit back contentedly and say, "Oh, we have some fine Catholic teachers in our school, yes, sir. That Mr. Smith is in church every Sunday and Miss Black sings in the choir."

All very true, but Mr. Smith and Miss Black aren't worth a tenpenny nail between them when it comes to safeguarding the religion of their Catholic students or of any of their students for that matter. Of late years classroom teachers have waged a campaign for the right to discuss controversial issues in the classroom—with rather tepid results, to be sure, but they have attained a certain freedom.

How does the average Catholic teacher avail himself of this semi-freedom? In the first place his consciousness of his dependence makes him feel that it is freedom in name only. Whether it is true of Catholics in general, I do not know, but it is true that the Catholic teacher will, more often than not, do a complete backward somersault rather than have it said that his religion flavored his teaching. Perhaps he has never run into active prejudice. He may simply share that queer complex of too many Catholic teachers, the complex which makes them feel grateful to the system because it is tolerant of their kind.

Let us look at the Catholic teaching literature. He is just a bit nervous about Chaucer's prologue to *The Canterbury Tales,* the Catholic elements in Shakespeare, and the very Catholic interpretation of the love of Christ in Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven,* to mention only a few examples. It is a little safer to pass over them quickly than to avail himself of Sister Madeleva's excellent essay on the Prioresse or Brother Leo's treatment of Catholicism in Shakespeare, although to do so would certainly be legitimate enrichment of his subject matter. And he is just as weak in a defensive way. Any graduate student of literature is aware of the unfair treatment accorded the Church in the works of many authors like Milton and Scott, yet the Catholic teacher lets such passages pass without comment. He feels—and he is usually right—that any such comment would be interpreted as Catholic prejudice, even Catholic propaganda. Still in the next classroom a Lutheran history teacher may be teaching a version of the Reformation which will leave no doubt in the mind of his listeners that Luther was a heroic figure who waged a glorious campaign against a corrupt Church. He will be doing so in all sincerity with no thought of bias or of being criticized for bias.

Our non-Catholic colleagues feel, I know, that they are most impartial on all controversial matters, but these are the days of group guidance, of the correlated curriculum, of "education for life." Adhering strictly to the bare bones of course material is a thing of the distant past. We believe today that a student must be able to see the material of each course as a part of his whole education and to see its relation to his everyday life. To teach, believing that, is to make absolute impartiality a myth. Naturally the teacher resorts to his personal philosophy—usually, in a non-Catholic, a blend of humanitarianism and rationalism—in order to make this relationship clear. This complicates the plight of the Catholic teacher.

I have taught with biology teachers who pay lip service to the concept of man as a creature responsible to his Creator, but who teach, at the same time, the theory of evolution in such a way that the student comes to the conclusion that the only thing that differentiates man from other living beings is the development of his nervous system. Even if they try to keep religion in sight, there are still dangers. "I never let them lose sight of the Creator," one biology teacher told me earnestly, "I tell them the Creator is *inherent* in all

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protoplasm. I make them see that all nature is a part of the Creator."

Other science teachers impress on their students their own admiration for the great scientists who sacrified themselves for the physical betterment of the race and, indirectly and unknowingly, make that physical betterment seem an end in itself. In this same connection they discuss such subjects as the sterilization of the unfit—pro and con, to be sure—but, believing as they do, they cannot help but make the first arguments more convincing. They might as well say, "Oh, yes, of course, there's a God—but now these are the scientific facts . . ."

I wish I had kept track of the students who asked me privately if I didn't think the Church was "all wet" on the Spanish question. They hadn't developed that attitude from reading communistic literature, I assure you. They picked it up from their good solid Republican teachers of social science. In all good faith the average social science teacher lets his pupils know that human progress made a surging leap forward when men shook off the "bonds of medievalism." He treats subjects like the decline of the family as a social unit and the weakening of personal responsibility, making them seem inevitable in a process of progress and growth.

It is absurd to imagine that Catholic students do not feel the effect of this organized avoidance of religion. It is still more absurd to imagine that there are so few Catholic students in the public schools that they do not deserve the attention of the Catholic public. At a rough guess there are probably two to three million Catholic children in non-Catholic schools. Quite naturally they are influenced by the social system and the schools which relegate religion to a place of very minor importance in the scheme of things. Their religion is strictly a Sunday affair.

Approximately one-third of my pupils are Catholics or should be Catholics. When, in the usual course of events in my English classes, they wrote their autobiographical sketches stressing the events, facts and persons in their lives which had influenced them, not one—not one single one—thought his religion worthy of mention, much less such events as his first Holy Communion and Confirmation. I would like to attribute this to a general laxity in matters of religion but, in honesty, I can't. Imagine my feelings as I picked up paper after paper written by my Lutheran students to read—"Our minister plowed through mountainous snow drifts on his way to baptize me," "The greatest day of my life was my confirmation day," or, simply, "I am a Lutheran."

Not a local situation

Nor is this condition a local peculiarity. In the city high school I referred to above one of the Catholic teachers was asked by the confraternity director in her parish to recommend some of her outstanding Catholic students for leadership. She couldn't quite think of any offhand but promised to send a list as soon as possible, thinking it would be quite a simple matter to inquire among some of the students she knew well. After a week or so she had to resort to the office records. Her students, her Catholic students, simply did not know who the other Catholics were. It just wasn't one of the things the outstanding Catholic students made known about themselves. Both her students and mine live close to Catholic churches, attend Catholic instruction hours once a week, even belong to study clubs—but still theirs is a Sunday religion.

What can the Catholic teacher do about it? Very little, I'm afraid. His weakness in the legitimate defense of the Church, his impotence in the face of the faulty teaching of his colleagues are results of his dependence on the non-Catholic public and the indifference of the Catholic layman. He does not ask, naturally, that he be allowed to force the articles of his creed on his students. He asks only that he be allowed to base his teaching on a sound philosophy, a philosophy which admits of religion as a basis for true education.

Need for Catholic interest

If Catholics, who support the public schools by taxes and whose children attend them, would interest themselves in the teaching of those schools, the Catholic teacher would be, on one hand, relieved of the responsibility he now feels and, on the other, supported in his right to teach truly. Protestant groups, aware of this dangerous neglect of religion in our educational system, are already acting if a letter in the *Scholastic,* national weekly for high school students, can be considered significant. The letter is from the Reverend George L. Cutton of Albany.

> May I take your time to point out what seems to me to be a mistaken policy common to many, if not most, public school enterprises? I refer to the taboo on religious subjects or references, as though the separation of church and state meant the separation of religion and education. This unfortunate taboo, for fear that someone might object to something or other, is neither necessary nor honest.

A clearer echo of the Holy Father's letter to America last autumn has yet to sound from any Catholic group. Yet we are the most closely concerned. I note that the letter heading is "The Albany City Council of Religious Education." Perhaps there are Catholics cooperating with Reverend Mr. Cutton. If so, as a Catholic teacher who is in daily contact with the problem of our religionless education I must rejoice. An aroused Catholic public can do much to remove the stigma, for it is a stigma, which is attached to religion today.

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What Bargaining Unit?

The NLRB has run into many snags in trying to establish a basis for determining proper bargaining units.

By David A. McCabe

THERE is little doubt that the "appropriate unit" provision of the National Labor Relations Act is in for more intensified attack at the present session of Congress. The members of the National Labor Relations Board, which has to apply the pertinent paragraph of the Act, are at odds over the policy that the Board should follow in applying it. The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations are both attacking the way in which the discretionary power of the Board in this matter has been used, but for different reasons. Apparently it has become impossible for the Board to exercise its authority without offending one labor group or another. Is this just an incident of the AFL-CIO conflict, or is the difficulty imbedded in the Act itself?

In some measure the difficulty is inherent in the statute. Two features of the Act make it necessary for Congress itself or some administrative agency to decide what is the "unit" of workers "appropriate" for the choice of representatives for collective bargaining. First, the Act makes it obligatory upon the employer "to bargain collectively" with the representatives chosen by the majority of the workers in a "unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining." Second, the Act excludes "collective bargaining" by any minority group within the appropriate unit if the majority within that unit has chosen representatives for that purpose. But what is a "unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining"? Is it a craft? Or a plant? Or all the employees of the same company, if the company operates several plants or mines? Or is it all the employees in the same craft or industry who are employed by employers who act collectively in labor matters? And is the test of "appropriateness" the same all the time and for each occupation or industry, or does it vary?

Congress did not attempt to answer these questions, except the last and it answered that in the affirmative. "It varies," said Congress in effect. Therefore, it did not define the unit in the statute but left it to the National Labor Relations Board to decide *in each case* whether "the unit appropriate for purposes of collective bargaining shall be the employer unit, craft unit, plant unit, or subdivision thereof" (subsection 9 (b)). Thus the Board may make all the plants of a particular company one unit, or it may decide that each plant shall be a separate unit, or that several of the plants shall constitute one unit and two or three other plants shall remain separate units. It may recognize half a dozen tool makers as a unit or it may lump the tool makers in with the other employees in a plant unit. It may include office and clerical employees in the same unit with "production employees" or it may make the production employees a separate unit. And it may decide these issues one way in some cases and another way in other cases.

Why such broad control?

Why did Congress give the Board such broad control over a matter as important as the bargaining unit? This is clearly not a fact-finding function but the power to decide an important issue of policy. Presumably this power was given to the Board because Congress thought it was thereby disposing of that issue. The sponsors of the Act apparently believed that the policy was already settled, namely a policy of prescribing in each case that unit which would be most favorable to the "only organization making a bona fide effort at collective bargaining," to use the characterization of the first National Labor Relations Board. The primary purpose behind "9 (b)" was the desire to prevent the *employer* from foisting a unit upon the workers that would leave a bona fide union submerged in a company-dominated or non-union majority, or would allow a company-dominated organization to continue to "represent" the workers in a single plant or mine of a company when the outside union had a majority in the company's plants or mines as a whole. In short, an "appropriate" unit would be one in which an outside union had a majority. It would have been difficult to put all this in the Act. The easiest way seemed to be to leave the choice of the unit to the Board and trust the Board to select that unit which would be most favorable to an independent or outside union, a "favoritism" which would be clearly in line with the intent of the statute.

There is no evidence that the sponsors of the Act intended to uproot any "craft" units that were then recognized in collective bargaining. On the other hand it clearly was not intended to encourage

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"splintering" of organized or to-be-organized workers into bargaining units smaller than those recognized by the national unions that held the respective "jurisdictions." And it was generally assumed that in case of a conflict between two outside unions over the bargaining unit the Board would accept the ruling of the highest court of organized labor—which was then the AFL, for most organized workers—in the matter. To be sure, this would allow the shunting of groups here or there into units in which they would be represented by unions that they would not have chosen, but these things were considered part of the domestic concerns of organized labor and not affairs in which a government board should interfere. The workers would be represented by a bona fide union in any event, and that was assumed to be all that mattered.

It is easy to see, therefore, how badly the AFL-CIO conflict, which did not come out in the open until after the Board was appointed, wrecked the premises upon which control over the bargaining unit had been vested in the Board. "Appropriateness" could no longer be measured in terms of the largest unit that would give a majority for the union whose "jurisdiction" was recognized by the Federation; the choice of the unit became itself the determinant of jurisdiction as between rival outside unions, in many cases.

Nevertheless it must not be assumed that peace between the rival federations will do away with the bargaining unit issue entirely. Unless Congress enacts, as does not seem likely, that no unit may be recognized for the choice of bargaining representatives which has not the approval of the union whose "jurisdictional" claim over that field is recognized by the highest tribunal of organized labor—even though the workers seeking recognition for this new unit have never been affiliated with either the union in question or the federation—the necessity of governmental determination of the unit will remain. It does not seem possible to enforce the intent of "8 (5)"—the requirement of bargaining with the representatives of the majority—without the fixing of the unit. To refuse certification of any representatives while there is a conflict between two unions over the unit would be equivalent to suspending "8 (5)" for the duration of the interunion conflict. You cannot legally oblige an employer to bargain unless you tell him with whom he must bargain.

What, then, if anything, should be done about the bargaining unit? What was said to be an "administrative matter" when the Act was drawn up (and when the designation of the unit was considered to be little more than another defense again employer interference or employer domination) has by the force of events been revealed in its true nature as a political matter, in the sense that it involves a decision on a question of public policy. Should this decision still be left to an administrative board—the members of which apparently would be glad to be rid of it—or settled by Congress itself in the statute? If the latter, what standard of appropriateness should be laid down? Obviously there is not general agreement upon what the standard should be. If there were, maybe the Board itself would have found it ere this.

The various ideas

At one end are those who insist that the *most effective* unit for collective bargaining is the only appropriate unit. Most of the adherents of this position hold, apparently, that the most effective unit is the largest unit in which any single union has a majority over non-unionists or over any combination of unions seeking smaller units within that unit. Thus, the Board should be required to ascertain what unit the majority desires and designate it as the appropriate unit, to the exclusion of any smaller unit. This would mean that even if a smaller unit would be an appropriate unit in the absence of a majority for the larger—and inclusive—unit, it could not be an appropriate unit in the presence of a majority favoring a larger unit. In the opinion of some, that is what the law intended, and the Board is now evading its duty in not following that construction. Hence it is argued that the Act should be amended to prohibit the Board from "carving out" smaller units from any larger unit in which there is a majority for the more inclusive unit as defined by those who seek to have it designated as the appropriate unit.

Then there is the opposite view, namely, that any unit is an appropriate unit if it is distinct enough to be entitled to collective bargaining in the absence of any claim from a labor organization of wider scope to represent the workers in that group. In this view, real self-determination in the choice of representatives demands that freedom of choice be carried down to the lowest denomination that could possibly be accorded the right of collective bargaining *as against the employer* if all the other employees were unorganized. It is the right of the workers to bargain collectively, as contrasted with the employer's former right to refuse them collective bargaining, that furnishes the key to "appropriateness." If the group asking for separate choice of representation is a majority of a unit sufficiently distinct that it would be an unfair labor practice for the employer to refuse them collective bargaining if all the other workers were non-union or members of a company-dominated association, then this unit is an appropriate one regardless of what the other workers desire. The right to be recognized as a unit for the choice of bargaining representatives is, in this view, a right that is as independent of the wishes of workers outside the unit as it is of the wishes of

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the employer. Clearly this was not what the Act said. However, the question is, should the appropriate unit be now so defined in the statute?

It ought to be possible to fix either one of these standards in the law if that is what the country wants. Offhand it would seem that unless either one or the other is laid down in the statute, to be followed as a uniform rule, the choice of the bargaining unit might as well be left where it is now—with the Board. But if the unit is to be defined in the statute the choice would seem to lie between self-determination reduced to the lowest possible terms, on the one hand, and the largest unit that can command a majority, on the other.

Self-determination or majority rule

The choice reduces itself essentially to one between self-determination and "majority rule." Which should be paramount? If majority rule means rule of the majority in the largest unit in which there is a majority for that unit, self-determination by minority groups, however homogeneous and no matter how unanimous within their respective units, must give way. If self-determination with respect to the unit comes first, then majority rule means merely majority rule within the unit and not majority rule with respect to what the unit shall be. What the unit shall be would then be decided by a fairly objective test—namely, what is the smallest unit that would be acceptable if all the workers outside that unit were unorganized?

There seems little doubt that the "largest unit in which there is a majority for one unit" standard is better adapted in general to the purpose of furthering the organization of the unorganized. On the other hand, there is no doubt whatever that this rule would deprive the smaller, more homogeneous groups of a legal right they formerly had to choose for themselves the type of representation they desire. Of course the legal right was not much good to them unless they could persuade or compel the employer by economic pressure to deal with them, perhaps against opposition from another union. But the question is whether a law that declares the right to collective bargaining to be a positive one should deprive any group of workers of the right to separate collective bargaining, unless, of course, they are merely a minority in the class of workers doing the same work for the same employer.

Would not the recognition of the right of self-determination for each distinct group make for less effective collective bargaining for the mass of workers? Probably it would in many cases. Self-determination in the choice of representatives does not necessarily mean separate bargaining; it means merely that the majority in that unit determines whether it will have separate collective bargaining or join with other units through selecting the same union or set of representatives to bargain for them. However, self-determination would undoubtedly allow groups of skilled workers to separate themselves from others, if they chose, for what some would regard as selfish reasons. The right to choose involves the right to choose mistakenly, and even selfishly. The country must make up its mind whether its primary interest is in establishing the right to collective bargaining through representatives of their own choosing as a fundamental right of every group of workers distinct enough to bargain collectively, or in making what it believes to be the most effective units for collective bargaining for the mass of workers the legal mold for worker organization for bargaining purposes.

It must be admitted that specifying the unit in the Act would of itself neither get rid of inter-union disputes nor do away with the necessity of the Board, or some administrative agency, defining the limits of the unit in each case—unless we wish to leave that to the courts. In ascertaining the choice of the majority, someone must pass on whether this or that worker votes in this group, or even upon what are the limits of the "employee unit" in a particular instance. In some cases these questions may involve only one union. In others they may involve conflicting contentions of two or more unions.

It is all very well to insist that unions should settle their inter-union disputes without resort to the courts or to any administrative agency. But if the law is to guarantee to workers the positive right to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, then the workers must not be deprived of that right merely because some other organization challenges it. Governmental responsibility for determining who are the representatives of the majority in the appropriate unit is the price that must be paid for "8 (5)." And the price that must be paid for that governmental determination where there is a conflict between unions is the liability to charges of bias, of denial of collective bargaining rights, or even of "Fascism"!

If You Have Nothing

The gesture of a gift is adequate.
If you have nothing: laurel leaf nor bay,
No flower, no seed, no apple gathered late,
Do not in desperation lay
The beauty of your tears upon the clay.

No gift is proper to a Deity,
No fruit is worthy for such power to bless.
If you have nothing, gather back your sigh,
And with your hands held high, your heart held high,
Lift up your emptiness!

JESSICA POWERS.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

WHAT IS written below about a book which I am now reading should not be regarded as criticism or a review, in the technical sense of those two words, but rather as a preliminary report dealing with the book as an event rather than as a work on that most abstruse of all subjects: the phenomena of high mysticism. The book in question is "Mystical Phenomena in the Life of Theresa Neumann," by the Most Reverend Josef Teodorowicz, Archbishop of Lemberg, translated by Reverend Rudolph Kraus (Herder, $4.00). In order to criticize it, that is to say, to judge it adequately, or even quite correctly to review it—that is to say, supply a dependable summary account of its thesis and arguments and *data*—a writer should possess far more sound knowledge of theology and psychology and medical science and philology than a journalist like myself could possibly acquire. Moreover a layman with even a rudimentary sense of the sacredness of theology must approach the task of writing about this book with great diffidence.

I do not mean that laymen necessarily must be disqualified as critics of such a work, for as a matter of fact laymen have established themselves among the most respected authorities in several branches of theology, as such names as Baron von Hugel and Arthur Preuss and W. G. Ward go to prove. But these were men who subjected themselves for many years to the most strict and thorough discipline in the study of their subjects, even as their clerical brethren also do. That such responsible writers will deal with this latest of the many books devoted to Theresa Neumann may be taken for granted. Why, then, it may quite justly be asked, should a journalist attempt to say anything at all about it? My answer is that many readers may, and most emphatically I think they should, read Archbishop Teodorowicz's study of the stigmatic of Konnersreuth, even although they will be quite unable to pass personal judgment upon the book and must leave the discussion of its technical aspects alone. And a journalist may write about it in the same way, calling it to the attention of readers because of the very great importance of the book as an event: as an interpretation also of the great events proceeding in that little village in south Germany.

There are many books about Theresa Neumann and innumerable pamphlets and magazine and newspaper articles. Some of the books and many of the articles treat of Theresa Neumann pathologically, as an extreme instance of hysteria, a neurotic case. A few others accuse both Theresa Neumann, her family and others, both clerical and lay members of the "Konnersreuth group," of deliberate fraud. But other books—of which the volume now under consideration is most notable—and a great proportion of the periodical literature dealing with Konnersreuth consider Theresa Neumann to be among the greatest mystics of all history. Their writers believe and give their reasons for believing that this simple peasant woman has lived for many years without food or drink, save for sips of water taken after receiving the Eucharist. For many years, as they state from observations continuously made, Theresa has borne wounds in her body similar to those inflicted upon Christ in His Crucifixion. In her visions she lives again and reports the incidents of the Passion of Christ and other scenes in the life of Our Lord. Although a peasant of the humblest condition, devoid of all but the most elementary education, in her visions she uses words from the ancient Aramaic tongue and from Hebrew and Latin and Greek and Portuguese and other tongues and dialects. Now all these and many other most wonderful and at times utterly mysterious events and conditions are vouched for not by the mere voice of rumor and gossip, but in this profoundly scholarly work by no less a person than an Archbishop of the Church. Incidentally it may be said that they also are vouched for by an American member of the hierarchy of the Church, Archbishop Schrembs of Cleveland, who is referred to several times in Archbishop Teodorowicz's learned and profound study of this most extraordinary case. And they are only two among a host of high officials and the clergy in general, who believe in the literal reality of the mystical phenomena at Konnersreuth.

Now for Catholics worthy of claiming the name, there can be no question that the explanation of Konnersreuth can be that of conscious fraud and deception. That is ruled out by the character, the qualifications and the factual testimony of the cardinals and bishops and priests and nuns and well qualified Catholic and non-Catholic physicians and other scientific men who have witnessed and testified in this matter. There remains, then, only the question as to whether a purely natural explanation can be found for Theresa's stigmata, visions and prophecies; or whether the root of the explanation must be sought for in the supernatural sphere. For Archbishop Teodorowicz, after many years of close observation and testing of the phenomena, in the light of his profound knowledge both of natural and supernatural laws and phenomena, the verdict must be rendered in favor of a supernatural reading of the case. As the publishers of the book state the matter, the point is as follows: "If these manifestations are explicable psychologically, the faithful should be warned against attaching any religious significance to them. If they are fraudulent, they should be vigorously denounced. If, however, they are genuine and supernatural, they come from God and are intended for some good purpose."

The Archbishop of Lemberg, in summarizing the conclusions of his book, unequivocally states his own opinion that the phenomena at Konnersreuth do indeed come from God. They rebuke and confound materialism and the science that permits itself no philosophy or belief save those determined by stark realism. As he writes: "Science which adores the material world as its idol cannot be hit in a more vulnerable spot than when in a peasant maid the fundamental law of the preservation of life through nourishment is suspended in favor of a higher and spiritual food." Again, as he says, the phenomena of stigmatization are not necessary for faith; faith is not built on them.

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"Cardinal Faulhaber in his beautiful and stirring address on Konnersreuth explained this. But the triumph of faith is ennobled and made joyful when its tenets portray to the world a picture drawn by a supernatural Hand in a marvelous manner. The dam of time is broken and the bloody passion of Christ flows in powerful streams right into the present." Not on the mountain top at Berchtesgaden, where the temporal ruler of Germany dreams his dreams of power and pride, but in the cottage among the pines at Konnersreuth, where the willing victim of love's sacrifice unites herself with God, is the destiny of Germany and of the whole world most truly portrayed. Therefore even simple lay people should read and ponder this momentous book about Theresa Neumann.

Communications

FOOLISH BRITAIN

Plattsburg, N. Y.

TO the Editors: American public opinion is definitely on the side of the Allies in the present war, but unless care is taken there may be a slackening of enthusiasm for their cause. Ideals are not as potent a force in a materialistic world as the cold facts of commerce.

The action of the British Government in stopping our ships for examination and holding mail for scrutiny is not new to us. The excuse offered is that search must be made for foreign exchange, securities and other contraband that might be destined to Britain's enemy. We need not examine into the technicalities of Britain's rights in the matter. Of greater importance is the reasoning behind England's affronts. The interference with any neutral rights under international law is a questionable expedient, but to infringe the good will of a neutral as powerful as the United States to prevent the receipt of the small quantity of contraband which could be forwarded by mail would seem even less profitable.

The risk which is being taken causes one to wonder whether there may not be something of greater import behind Britain's moves. We are now engaged in strengthening our Merchant Marine, and our air lines pioneered the Atlantic route. Britain, on the other hand, is fully occupied with the carrying on of a major war. She has always cast indignant glances at any foreign developments which might displace her as a carrier of the world's goods. If we were to be permitted to maintain our ships and planes without hindrance while hers are withdrawn for was purposes, the return of peace might find us in possession of trade which she covets and which has heretofore been vital to her well-being. Our support as a neutral may not, consequently, be as valued as our position of competitor is feared.

Again, the discrimination against our tobacco is closely related to our future commercial welfare. Turkey's friendship may possibly be more valued than ours but, of greater importance, Turkey is definitely less of a rival in the world's trade. Therein may lie the explanation of Britain's failure to woo us more vigorously. On the other hand, if the newspapers are correct, consideration is being given to the resumption of imports of tobaccos from this country because of the loss of duty. All of which goes to prove that dollars and cents or pounds and shillings determine the relationships of nations. Our political concepts closely parallel Britain's; our commercial interests cross hers.

There is little we may do about it, but Britain would be wise to be more careful in her wooing of us. She can no longer afford a "take it or leave it" attitude in her wooing. She needs friends and needs them badly. She would be wise to brush up on her "technique" in wooing unless, indeed, she has no desire to press her suit with us.

BROCKHOLST LIVINGSTON.

[*The following paragraphs are from an article by Hilaire Belloc in* The Weekly Review *for February 15, 1940:*

"The second reason for the misuse of the term democracy, especially here in England, is the burdensome necessity under which we lie of flattering the United States.

"This last reason I think is, for the moment, the strongest of all. Our Dons and our public men tumble over each other in their appeal to America. They are so shameless in their wooing of the United States that they have even fallen to calling England a Democracy! That falsehood would bewilder the men who founded the modern greatness of England. Of all modern European states England is the one which has the longest and firmest tradition of aristocracy—that is, Class Government. She owes her strength to that tradition. Class government has given to England that function which is called in armies 'Cadres.' It provides a framework for the state; it puts forth leaders; it enforces an instinctive social discipline. There is something ridiculous in having to pretend that our system of class government is other than it is, and in proportion as that pretence is insincere it is not only ridiculous but immoral."]

BINGO

TO the Editors: Groups of thinking, or merely sensitive laymen, in the Church today are wondering just how far their shepherds are going in their "end justifies the means" attitude toward bingo. Granted that it is all for the greater honor and glory of God. Granted, the throbbing necessity for income. Granted, the fact that there are great numbers of people who feel no compunction to support their church, who give nothing unless there is material gain or at least the hope of some, in the giving. Granted that need cries from the depths of every puny collection basket or lears from cracked and leaking ceilings. Still, I say, let us eat the bread of poverty with dignity.

And if this is too much to ask, then couldn't we, at least, keep this need within the confines of our respective parishes? Must we flaunt it in cheap placards all over the front of the houses of God? Must we reach for the Sunday papers with the knowledge that tonight's Sacred Heart Church bingo ad will be sandwiched bold and proud between the Cutie Cutes Burlesque and a roadhouse?

I know that there are dioceses where this letter will seem like an exaggeration or the work of a crank, that there are bishops who will not tolerate such things. Let their flocks be thankful, thankful that they are not put in

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the position of apologizing for the cheapness and tawdriness with which their church, their Holy Roman Catholic, is cloaked:

Our Lady of Mercy! Bingo Tonight!
One thousand dollars! We do it up right!

Roman façade or tall Gothic spires,
With placards of Bingo your beauty is mired.

Must we, who cherish your dignity still,
Submit to this crudeness, this omen of ill?

Must we, the wielders of right and of truth,
Weaken and cheapen ourselves with this loot?

Must the synonym for all Catholicity be
Double Bingo Tonight! Every other card free!

ELOISE SPAETH.

REV. OR REVD.

Saint Paul, Minn.

TO the Editors: Some years ago I started a little debate in THE COMMONWEAL by suggesting that the title for priests be abbreviated *Revd.* instead of *Rev.* I lost the debate by weight of numbers; in fact, I think I was the only one on my side.

Today I noticed with glee that the *Downside Review* (January) uses *Revd.* on its outside front cover. So perhaps we can reopen the debate.

Let us leave the *Rev.* for our non-Catholic brethren (Mr. Mencken has used seas of ink to make it theirs) and make a distinction by reserving *Revd.* for priests. Every one would gain. Perhaps we could even persuade the newspapers to follow that style.

Another thing has happened in the last five years to recommend the practice. I mean the fact that so many priests write without their title. It is a good idea because a writer stands or falls on his writing, not on his title. If he has *Rev.* before and Ph.D. after a bad piece of writing, he is not excused by abbreviations. Usually the *Rev.* before his name merely prejudices the reader. On the other hand, if the reader discovers him to be a priest, after having been pleased with his article, the reader is doubly impressed.

Again, abbreviations that can be pronounced are not good. Witness the abuses of *Prof.* and *Doc.* *Revd.* cannot be pronounced but *Rev.* can, and is.

REVD. PAUL BUSSARD.

WE MUST BE RED

Lester Prairie, Minn.

TO the Editors: THE COMMONWEAL in my estimation is the foremost Catholic publication of its kind in America. It is unfortunate that there is not a better understanding among some Catholics of its aims, and the things it stands for. The most frequent accusation thrown at THE COMMONWEAL is that of being communist. Probably this is not novel enough to evoke your interest—but wait: they have the goods on you this time. In the issue of February 23 they say "you have both Marx and Engels writing for you."

LUCAS M. OTTO.

[*"They" have for a fact. The issue contained: "Guilds and Labor Unions" by* Marx *(Walter John); "A Gardener from Ringlings" by* Engels *(Vincent). The Eds.*]

GILSON LECTURES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: COMMONWEAL readers in the Middle West and especially those in the vicinity of Bloomington, Indiana, will, I am sure, be interested to learn that Professor Etienne Gilson of the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, Canada, has been appointed Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Indiana University. Professor Gilson will deliver a series of four public lectures at the university during the week of March 2. The topic of the lectures is to be "God and Philosophy."

It will be remembered that Professor Gilson has held similar appointments at Harvard University and the University of Virginia. Formerly a professor at the Sorbonne, he continues to hold the position of Professor of the History of Medieval Philosophy at the Collège de France.

The authorities of Indiana University certainly deserve commendation for making this appointment.

WILLIAM O'MEARA.

THE PERPETUAL SACRIFICE

Flushing, N. Y.

TO the Editors: It seems a pity that Maurice Lavanoux (March 1), because of a nature sensitized to art, was led to the grievous fault of disparaging a picture the purpose of which is noble, the execution of which is earnest. Frankly, I should hate to have upon my conscience the stigma of having kept by my criticism one soul from seeing it. Surely there must be countless numbers who, like me, are ignorant of liturgical art but educated in values; who found in the picture "The Perpetual Sacrifice" a coordinated, clearly-explained, holily-presented lesson on the Mass. I came away so richened in appreciation after sitting through the film once, I saw it again. (Which stamps me as a moron, I suppose, in Mr. Lavanoux's opinion!)

Of course the presentation is amateurish; but the essence of the Precious Blood courses through it. That is why it should be seen by every Catholic who like myself stands in sad need of more instruction on the Mass. Would Mr. Lavanoux argue that a Botticelli hung in a homemade frame in a tenement would be less essentially valuable? Must we have truth set in art for it to be *bona fide* truth?

What about the artistry of the Mass in the Catacombs? At crude altars aboard ship? Before a square piano where, by grace of a movable altar stone, a priest offers the Sacrifice in petition for the success of an infant Church about to be born on the site? Must religion have a cathedral setting to deserve attendants?

In my (admittedly moronic) opinion, Maurice Lavanoux's letter is a testimonial, of art in the *reductio ad absurdum*. I plead with Catholic readers everywhere to see the picture under discussion for its intrinsic value.

MARIE DUFF.

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The Stage & Screen

Night Music

THIS IS open season for boy-meets-girl-in-New-York plays, and now Clifford Odets has written his version. Unlike Elmer Rice's "Two on an Island," which the Odets play resembles and which makes the New York locale more important than the romance, "Night Music" stresses the boy and girl and gives them Manhattan for a background. He also gives them, surprisingly enough for this dramatist, a detective as a kindly mentor and philosopher who even quotes from a "late, great cardinal." The girl and boy are sadly in need of his guidance as they stumble confusedly toward an indefinite goal. She, rebelling against her smug, middle-class Philadelphia parents and salesman ex-fiancé, finds in New York and in the boy the vitality for which she yearns. He, a loud, chip-on-the-shoulder, Saroyan sort of character, a Greek-American nobody, "petty cash trying to be a mint," but nevertheless "sweet like a hardboiled Easter egg," becomes more confused when he is torn between angry resentment against everything, especially being an under-dog, and falling in love with the girl. Jane Wyatt plays the girl with charm and poise that are a fine balance for Elia Kazan's excellent performance in the energetic, militant rôle. Morris Carnovsky's sincere acting makes convincing the detective who is in love with human possibilities. Although "Night Music" does not come to any startling conclusions, it is interesting entertainment and does have Odets's keen wit and understanding of people to keep it moving. Philip Loeb, Roman Bohnen, Sanford Meisner and other members of the Group Theatre under Harold Clurman's direction do a good job of making these people live. Mordecai Gorelik's imaginative sets and Hanns Eisler's incidental music sustain the young-love-in-a-turbulent-city mood. *(At the Broadhurst Theatre.)*

Another Sun

ONE MIGHT expect Dorothy Thompson, with her knowledge of what's going on in this dark world and wide, and Fritz Kortner, with his background in the drama, to write an interesting and stirring play about refugees in New York. Their material is authentic enough, but they have failed to shape this tragedy of reality into living drama. Using the situation of a self-exiled actor, a great German Hamlet, who though surrounded by other exiles from Germany, Russia, Italy and Austria and a couple of American reporters is pathetic and unhappy, and jobless because of his incapacity in English, the two playwrights keep "Another Sun" static and let it go stale. Nothing really happens on the stage. The refugees listen to exciting brodacasts during that winter of 1938, they sing nostalgicly of better days, a woman screams when she hears the favorite song of her husband who is in a concentration camp, the actor raises his voice once in anger. The cast cannot be blamed for this lethargic production that Fritz Kortner has directed. Handsome Hans Jaray, actually a Viennese exile, plays the German actor sympathetically, but with almost too much resignation. He gets good support from the other players, especially Johanna Hofer, Leo Bulgakov and Adrienne Gessner. Miss Thompson manages to shine through when she predicts that Nazi victims are going to get awfully mad one of these days and she warns Americans of "Danger! Red light ahead!" *(At the National Theatre.)*

Reunion in New York

WHILE "Another Sun" tells about refugees, "Reunion in New York" shows what real refugees can actually do here. This group has learned much about diction, American vernacular and timing since "From Vienna," their last season's revue. But they still have something to learn about what constitutes entertainment even in an informal revue. Their numbers range from the exceedingly clever razzing of William Saroyan and a satire about guides who conduct tours through modern galleries (with emphasis on the transition and line of Matusso) and such brilliant musical sketches as the one about Carmen who smuggles cigarettes into New York, to dull and tasteless scenes, "Borderline" and "Ain't Love Lawful," which drag in sex by the heels (probably as a concession to their idea of what an American audience wants). The revue's high spot is the interpretive dancing of Lotte Goslar whose psychological subtleties and parodies capture the very essence of a Woodsprite, Spinster and Mania for Waltzing. Seeing this slight revue with sentimental sympathies leaning toward the performers, one overlooks much and thanks the enthusiastic cast for a pleasant evening. *(At the Little Theatre.)*

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

From France to Hollywood—With Love

FRENCH FILMS, even when disappointing as is this recent crop, have much to offer and teach Hollywood about acting and direction. I wish the three under consideration were better examples because it isn't likely that there will soon be many new French pictures. *"Louise"* gives Grace Moore a chance to bring to the cinema the rôle from the opera she has sung so often. Although Abel Gance's direction of this story about love over Parisian rooftops and among Montmarte Bohemians is adequate, only Gustave Charpentier's music, especially arranged for this version, and the singing of Grace Moore, André Pernet and Georges Thill really moves one. For Louise herself to be at all convincing in the close-ups, she should be a much younger girl than Miss Moore. After the interesting first half of the film, artificiality piles up and becomes a bit thick.

So many psychopathics are collected for *"Human Beast"* that one looks for just one normal person to establish a standard. From Zola's novel which maintains that man is a helpless victim of heredity and environment, Jean Renoir has directed a powerful film. However, this film, in which crime and passion set in a philosophy of nineteenth-century naturalism and a symbolistic background of railroading, comes close to being laughable for its collection of neurotics. It is saved only by superb acting, fine

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photography and concise, intelligent direction. Jean Gabin, as the train engineer subject to fits of depression, headaches and a mad desire to kill whom he loves, believes that he is paying for the curse of his drunken ancestors. Simone Simon, as the erotic girl incapable of love because of a childhood ruined by a lustful godfather, hungers for tenderness. Ledoux, as this girl's insanely jealous husband, coldly and calmly kills her godfather without repentance. The pessimistic, preposterous story of violence that sees the world only as an asylum for such mental cases is more false than the overly sweet, sentimental pictures for which "Human Beast" strives to be an antidote.

It is unfortunate that such an excellent actor as Raimu must waste his fine talents on such a trifle as *"The Baker's Wife."* Marcel Pagnol has directed Jean Giono's story well enough but it still remains nothing but a drawn-out traveling-salesman-farmer's-daughter joke. Adultery is laughed at and put on an economic basis in this village when the baker's wife runs off with the handsome shepherd and the baker is so busy being deceived that he cannot bake. Raimu's performance as the cuckold is first rate, especially when he rationalizes or when he drowns his shame and sorrow in pernod or finally when he forgives his repentent wife. The film's bad taste reaches a climax when the priest, a sanctimonious, hypocritical fool, puns in his sermon about coming to the Good Shepherd instead of going with a bad one. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

More Rauschning

The Voice of Destruction. Hermann Rauschning. Putnam. $2.75.

IF PEOPLE were inclined to think hard about the world as it is, Herr Rauschning's latest book would beat on their brains like a club of doom. Much of it, particularly the sections which have to do with religion, has been told to friends in private conversation; but having it all set down in cold print, page after page, is a little like finding oneself in the rôle of Bernanos's hero who suddenly comes face to face with Satan. You will get the impression that this just can't be true. Rauschning's hero is not the dapper, ridiculous madman of American myth, who triumphs because a few snobbish Britishers would have it so or because Georges Bonnet is an idiot with money in Teutonic banks. He is rather the man who has subdued the German people—subdued it physically and morally, intellectually and even esthetically. The old Christian Churches, one more ancient in the land than Charlemagne, have been driven into hiding. Poets and philosophers are dumb. Even the army of Frederick the Great, Bluecher and Moltke is only an instrument in Hitler's hands. Nothing one can mention that is German —not even the occult operas of Wagner—has not been twisted in his hands and made into something it never previously was.

It is not enough to say that this "something" is overtly brutal, reckless, strange and vile. One could still argue, as some do, that the pogroms, the ruthless murder of Austrian, Czech and Pole, the massacre of 1934, the Reichstag fire, the enslavement of a hundred thousand adversaries in ways unheard of since the times of Barbary pirates were all accidental consequences of "forces" unleashed not by a man but by political injustice and economic unsettlement. I confess that believing all this is easier than believing Rauschning. For nothing is more incredible than that, after two thousand years, Christianity should suddenly have come to an end. Not in a ridiculous finale, like that of a multi-married slut grafting her endless empty amours on as many cocktails, but in a strong and crafty spirit whose meaning eludes, it has been shown, even the elect. Rauschning's Hitler may seem of course, if one misses the point, a kind of simpleton because he annihilates reason conceived of as the power which conjoins man's objectives with his circumstances. Nevertheless this dismissal of reason is not a banishing of the mind. Hitler believes as few men before him have believed in the mind. His world, like Emerson's, is not builded on cotton and iron. It is merely the perverse mind grown autocratic and almost irresistibly strong.

That is the lesson of Rauschning's book. It is useless to quibble about whether this or that detail is correct. The diagnosis has stood the test of all the years since 1923. Years ago one could only guess at the truth. Now one knows. Hitler is the maker of a new religion—a religion of force, of subjugation, of masses of men being whirled toward some ill-defined doom. It is no more possible to escape this challenge than it is to live in the eighteenth century. GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

BIOGRAPHY

In Place of Splendor. Constancia de la Mora. Harcourt. $3.00.

THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY of a daughter of the Spanish nobility richly deserves its place among the best-sellers. It gives a vivid picture of high society before the Spanish Civil War—education, customs of courtship and marriage, religious calibre, lack of contact with the ignorant and impoverished masses. It presents tragically divided Spain as a Republic in the early thirties, the author's own moving experiences right up to the Franco victory. It develops with the ring of sincerity the author's gradual transformation to the point she is convinced that Soviet Russia is Spain's only friend. It makes clear why she could believe without question that the Soviets were the only ones to print "the truth about Spain." As an ardent Loyalist she makes no mention of the anti-religious atrocities of the Madrid-Barcelona forces. The murder of Calvo Sotelo is admitted, but only as a reprisal for the earlier assassination of José Costello by the Fascists. The author's convictions are blindly Loyalist but her life story is a Spanish document which cannot be dismissed. At the same time it is autobiography of the first order. E. S.

Modern Short Biographies and Autobiographies. Edited by Marston Balch. Harcourt. $2.00.

AIMING at both a general and college student public, Mr. Balch has gathered together, with an introduction and short individual critiques, twenty-six favorites, of best seller popularity or of safe acclaim. James Joyce deciding not to become a Jesuit is one of the less expected, and Bliss Perry, Logan Pearsall Smith, Floyd Dell, John Reed and *New Yorker* "Profiles" are also included with the more expected ones. All are very well done, but by no means all pose the most important questions about men. An interesting collection, well representative of more capable recent American writing.

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CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Religion in the Third Reich. Michael Power. Longmans. $2.00.

THIS IS a book which it is advisable to leave unread. Reading it will merely develop in the mind of any normal and decent person such a sense of despair and futility as to make life at least temporarily seem not worth living. The book is written in a calm, methodical manner and relates how Catholic and Protestant religious organizations have died in Germany proper and in Austria. The author makes it clear that there has been no open struggle between the state and the churches in the Third Reich. National Socialism maintains that it has simply tried to make religion a more effective influence in German life. The documents liberally cited stress the wish of the party to purify the churches. Despite all the efforts, unfortunately successful, that have been made to deprive youth of religious instruction, the party still maintains that there has been no persecution of the church. Hitler can say that no churches have been closed, that the Reich has continued to grant money to the churches and that no clergyman has been molested because of matters relating to religion as such. The book makes one wonder once more why the Catholics in Germany have supported Hitler as they have, since without them he could neither have come into power nor remained there. One wonders why Pius XII in his capacity in 1933 as Papal Secretary of State formulated and arranged the signing of the Concordat. One wonders again why Cardinal Innitzer welcomed Hitler, with a record of five years of suppression of Catholics in Germany to his discredit at that time, to Austria in 1938. One wonders why the Lutherans permitted Hitler to weaken their organizations by the imposition of *Reichsbischof* Müller.

An American wonders why Catholics in Germany still deny that the Catholic Church is being persecuted in the Third Reich, after such a statement as the one here quoted appeared in the official party organ, the *Völkischer Beobachter,* on April 30, 1937: "The German people, and especially its young folk, know how to judge of people who convert the sacristy into a brothel, and whose perversion does not even shrink before the most sacred action of the Catholic Church, the Communion. . . . What parents conscious of their responsibility could now take the responsibility of entrusting their boys and girls to an organization, over a thousand members of which are sexual criminals?" That excerpt is merely one of many quoted (p. 226) to illustrate that the Nazis wished above all else to show, or rather to pretend to show, that the church organizations of Germany were not fit for the people to use, either for devotional or educational purposes. The churches, the Nazis maintained, could not possibly become decent enough for German patronage until all the leaders in the churches had openly and enthusiastically accepted all the dictates of the National Socialist party.

This reviewer can also certify that there was no particular evidence in the Third Reich last summer to make one feel that there was open persecution of the churches. Services were being held openly and were rather well attended by adults, but few young people were to be seen in them. The young people have been so completely absorbed by the anti-religious Hitler youth organizations, and have in turn so completely accepted the teachings of those organizations, that they, the youth of Germany, feel no need of the churches, and in fact despise the churches as organizations which cannot or will not become completely Germanic in origins and objectives. There can be little reason why anyone should object to the general conclusion of Michael Power, to the effect that if Hitler is permitted to continue his influence upon the young people of Germany for another decade, the Catholic Church in that nation will then be a forgotten religion and an utterly insignificant force in German life, since the Church is losing many adults and gaining practically no recruits. It is sad to realize that one man has been able to destroy religion in the minds of millions of Germans. The man must have been very powerful or the Catholicism must have been very weak. In Austria, it was evidently a combination of both circumstances.

PAUL KINIERY.

A Navy Second to None. George T. Davis. Harcourt. $3.75.

IN THIS excellent survey of the development of naval policy, technical questions have been avoided and attention has been wisely centered upon the evolution of naval ideology. It is a highly significant fact that, with the exception of the advocacy of reduction of the standing army and navy by the Democrats in 1868, there is not a single plank in the platform of American parties, major or minor, on naval policy until the Republican platform of 1884 called for a revival of the American fleet. At that time one or two English or French iron-clads could have destroyed our entire navy.

In 1890 "The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1600-1783," was published. Out of the panorama of history, Captain A. T. Mahan drew a vital principle which apparently explained the rise and fall of empires. The mainspring of empires in the past, he asserted, lay in control of the sea. The loss of such power was accompanied by decay, and only by control of the sea could a nation grow healthy and strong. Largely influenced by the Mahan dialectic, the United States decided to build and maintain a "fleet second to none but that of Great Britain." Today big-navy advocates, having received the cordial benediction of the man in the White House, are determined to build the greatest armada in the world.

Professor Davis concludes his well-balanced, dispassionate and thoroughly documented work with the timely warning that the American people should not squander their wealth "upon needless armament which may jeopardize the stability of our institutions or tempt us to pursue the will-o'-the-wisp of economic ambitions or power politics in distant parts of the world." JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

CRITICISM

Eighteenth Century English Literature and Its Cultural Background. A Bibliography. James S. Tobin. Fordham University Press. $2.00.

NOT pretending to be an exhaustive bibliography, this volume contains over 7,000 titles and is especially valuable for undergraduate as well as graduate students because it lists the editions more readily available and many introductory articles as well as the standard scholarly studies. The bibliographies of 169 authors are presented, and, moreover, special bibliographies on the historical background, society, culture and the arts, philosophy, religion and the sciences, sociological problems, education, memoirs, diaries, criticism, ballads, prose, journalism, drama; classical, French, German and other extra-national relations. Further bibliographical aids are listed. The work is beautifully printed and bound and

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makes one wish that the other centuries of English literature were likewise so intelligently and practically covered.

L. J. A. M.

FICTION

Native Son. Richard Wright. Harpers. $2.50.

IT IS nearly twenty years since Theodore Dreiser published his bulky "American Tragedy," an indictment of America's heartless worship of money and business success. Environment was meant to be the real villain in his rough-hewn tale of crime and inevitable punishment. However he produced a rather different effect. His hero Clyde Griffiths's sense of guilt was developed so painstakingly and he seemed so normal an individual that the reader came to identify himself individually with Clyde and feel personally guilty of the crime.

Richard Wright has followed a strikingly similar pattern in "Native Son." In this case it is more difficult for the reader to identify himself with young Bigger Thomas, who, by the time the story opens, is in a highly pathological state. Besides, the environment of South Side Chicago's Negro district is far more vicious, more potent for evil, than Clyde Griffiths' smaller mid-western factory town. Finally, Mr. Wright handles the problems of style with far greater ease than Mr. Dreiser. Except for the defense attorney's long speech toward the end of the book—a wholly unnecessary pointing of the moral—"Native Son" fairly races along both in narrative and dialogue. So Mr. Wright really does succeed in making environment the principal villain in this new American Tragedy.

Even compared with Dreiser this volume is strong meat. From the moment a giant black rat steals into the Thomas family's one-room flat, on the opening pages, till Bigger in his death cell bids his attorney farewell on page 359, "Native Son" is a "shocker." It is brutal, frank, sordid. It is no book for adolescents or for squeamish adults. But this brutality is skillfully subordinated to a wider purpose.

To be sure most Americans are no longer ignorant that the Negro over here is a victim of the most unjust discrimination. Many have heard, for instance, that in some parts of Harlem people sleep in three shifts in order to meet the high rents. Negroes have to pay the piper since they are barred from other sections of Manhattan. Lynching in the South and border states and the mental-emotional outlook that violence manifests are also widely known. But from most of us these situations are as far removed as a Chinese flood or the inhumanities of a French penal colony in the Guianas. Yet the problem is at our very doors.

Mr. Wright makes it real by reducing it to very simple human terms. When young Bigger Thomas goes to work for a wealthy family which might eventually have helped him, he already is a problem case. He is a member of a poolroom gang that has not yet pulled off a major crime but might well do so any day. He regularly has illicit relations with a young waitress. And deep in his breast rankles a burning resentment against the white race which seems to thwart his ambitions at every turn and keeps his family in abject misery. He cannot bear to face his true situation squarely.

What makes "Native Son" doubly tragic is that Bigger's first victim is a white girl who is sincerely trying to be his friend, to treat him as a fellow human being. Mary's sweetheart is a communist who also tries to befriend Bigger to the very end. Her mother, who is blind, loves to encourage Negroes to study and get ahead. The only poetic justice is that Mary's father was one of the landlords whose exorbitant rents cause such widespread misery in Chicago, New York and in all the other cities where Negroes are so harshly segregated.

The very first night of his new job Bigger finds that he has accidentally killed Mary Dalton. The story then rushes through a series of other crimes to Bigger's arrest and conviction with a sort of grim inevitability. Again it is highly reminiscent of the even more acute sense of impending doom that comes upon Dreiser's Clyde Griffiths, who knows and makes the readers of the "American Tragedy" painfully aware that nothing will save him from the chair.

Here and there Richard Wright gives hints as to the way out of the tragic situation he has epitomized so stirringly in Bigger Thomas. Boys' clubs and ping pong tables he holds in contempt; palliatives such as settlement houses do not provide the answer either for the injustices to his race. Religion appears in his pages as well-meaning but futile. Some new social system—not necessarily the Marxist one—is implicitly his prescription. As is so often the case in real life, only the communists in this novel succeed in convincing the Negro that they sincerely believe and act on the principle of the brotherhood of man.

There is one final reason that this startling book provides such a challenge to all Americans. Bigger knew that he, like many innocent lynch victims, would be presumed guilty as a matter of course if he was apprehended under suspicious circumstances. To be looked upon as ignorant, lazy, shiftless, vicious, subhuman by a white master race was what enraged him most. His deepest satisfaction is to know at the very end something that might have saved him six months earlier, that one white man really accepts him on equal terms as a man. Is that an impossible prescription for a starter?

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

The Loon Feather. Iola Fuller. Harcourt. $2.50.

THE HOPWOOD AWARD went this year to Miss Fuller's book, a subtle and spacious historical narrative of that island described accurately by the Ojibway word for turtle, Mackinac. Here is a novelty in fiction, a prize-winning novel that is *not* another chapter in the history of bleak mistakes made by confused committees. Out of her full knowledge of the island's biography, an awareness of its character and history, acquired from the profitable delights of long summer vacations, the author presents a living picture of the early decades of the nineteenth century "when life pressed on every side" in the mingling and recoiling of races on Mackinac. Miss Fuller is a native of southern Michigan whose talents were challenged by the scenic beauty and the vivid history of the north section of the state. Her writing gives you a definite sense of place.

Oneta, the daughter of Tecumseh, tells the story of her life. Few first person novels have the persuasive charm, the expert artlessness of reality sustained through "the long journey back over the years" of this narrative. Taught by her grandfather, the chief of the loon-bird Ojibways, that "any favor must always be repaid in full and complete measure," Oneta incurs, through one of life's peculiar ironies, a debt of honor to Pierre Debans and his fussy old mother. When circumstances, without melodramatic violence, catch her in the vortex of the story's exciting climax, Oneta, inspired by the realization of her

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position as the daughter of courageous Tecumseh, makes a decision that lets her live at peace with herself. Pierre, of course, never knew, never understood. You would not expect him to do that. He was French. Paul, her half-brother, did understand the heroism of her deed. Let Oneta tell: "Paul and I walked slowly down the beach. . . . I was emerging from a strangeness, and . . . I knew I should never again be as I had been before. . . . My mind [was] at ease in the warm glow of knowing my debt had been paid. As I looked along the shore at the roundness of the white pebbles at the water's edge, I saw among them a different shape, an unsoiled black and white feather, newly fallen from a passing loon-bird. I caught it up in joy, remembering that, as a token, the loon always dropped a wing feather when he was pleased. 'You have won your black feather,' said Paul." Young Doctor Martin Reynolds admired her courage too.

From Mackinac Island as a focus, rays of light radiate and touch the life of the world of culture and education in Quebec and France, of business and finance in New York, where John Jacob Astor dominates the fur trade of the nation, of Congressional muddles and decisions on land and Indian problems in Washington, and all these influences converge again on the island and its people.

Oneta's "clasp of memories" retains many varied characters, many conflicting personalities: Marthe, who is of great importance to the plot, and Baptiste Lamont; Roxanne, Jacques, and Charlie; Josette and Major Pierce; Mr. Stuart, Mrs. Riggs, Louise, and Armand. These, with the Indians of many tribes, the blackrobes, the nuns, even the old Irish cobbler in his cave, are your friends or your enemies as you become identified with the life portrayed in "The Loon Feather."

Henry James praised Constance Fenimore Woolson for her stories of Mackinac Island. He would have richer reasons to praise Iola Fuller. DANIEL S. RANKIN.

Sixteen Days. Hans Habe. Harcourt. $2.50.

THE "Sixteen Days" are the days of the Munich crisis. The story, which takes place in Geneva, is about what happened to four persons during those days. The four are a German spy, his wife, her lover and a German Jew refugee.

The author of this novel is a soldier, Hungarian by birth, now on active service in the French Foreign Legion. The story is prefaced with a passage from Heinrich Heine: "I love the Fatherland as much as you do. For love of it I have spent thirteen years in exile and for love of it I go back into exile, perhaps forever. . . ."

One understands, then, the anti-Nazi and anti-Hitler sentiments which are expressed both in the meaning of the story as a whole and more directly in many statements in the book. No doubt these sentiments are shared by the greater number of intelligent people all over the world today and yet many readers will feel that in a novel they prefer to have the story—the fiction—dominate. In this book the atmosphere overshadows the story and the background is more absorbing than the characters and their actions.

The same can be said of other contemporary novels which deal with the influence of Nazi ideology on human personality. Although these books may be well written—as "Sixteen Days" is—they are not really effective. This is because the true stories and news stories which come from Europe today are more fantastic and often more tragic than fiction dares to be. R. B.

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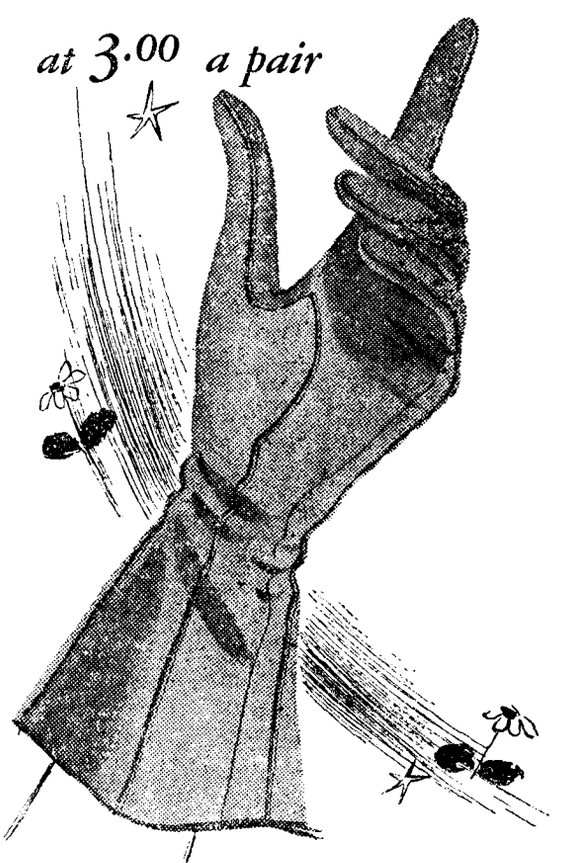

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The Inner Forum

THE CATHOLIC WORKER movement has been increasing throughout the country notably during recent months. The February issue of the paper (circulation about 125,000) lists two houses of hospitality in Canada, four Catholic Worker farms, and twenty-three houses of hospitality in American cities. Under the instigation of Peter Maurin, the United States ace Catholic agitator, Catholic Workers and the Redemptorist Fathers working together have opened a new Discussion Center on Catholic Doctrine in New York's lower East Side. It is a direct attempt to encourage conversions and discuss religious questions with the non-Catholics of the neighborhood.

In Pittsburgh a new and important step has been taken. Father Charles Owen Rice has received permission from Bishop Boyle to become resident director of Saint Joseph's House of Hospitality on Tannehill Street, "priest of a flophouse," as *Time* put it, or "first pastor of the 'down-and-outers,'" according to the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette*.

The Catholic Radical Alliance and St. Joseph's House have represented Catholic Worker activities in Pittsburgh for several years, having been founded in May and November, 1937. The House of Hospitality moved to its present address—the abandoned St. Rita's orphanage in the slums—in April, 1938. At present the permanent staff of 40 indigent men is serving 2,000 meals a day and sheltering 600 men nightly.

The *Pittsburgh Catholic* reports that: "From every part of the country men are coming to this state lured by false promises of jobs and urged on by political advertisements announcing the glad tidings of prosperity in Pennsylvania. . . . That is why the load at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality has been so heavy these last two months; that is why our line has become so enormous that we are actually desperate in our need."

Time tells: ". . . Father Rice moved into St. Joseph's himself, began celebrating his daily Mass in its tiny chapel. His down-and-outers could attend, or not, as they pleased. . . . His flophouse costs $500 a month, which Father Rice raises, keeps in an unlocked drawer. The drawer has never been robbed."

CONTRIBUTORS

June COYNE is a New York mother.

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David A. McCABE is a professor of economics at Princeton University. He has written extensively on labor relations and collective bargaining and was for some months Chairman of the Newark Regional Labor Board.

Jessica POWERS is a Wisconsin poet and critic resident in New York. Her last volume of verse is "The Lantern Burns."

Grenville VERNON will return as COMMONWEAL drama critic next week.

George N. SHUSTER has just received permanent appointmnt as President of Hunter College, New York.

Paul KINIERY is assistant dean of the Graduate School of Loyola University, Chicago.

John J. O'CONNOR teaches at St. John's University, Brooklyn, N. Y.; he was formerly managing editor of THE COMMONWEAL.

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